

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**RODERICK E. WALSTON, SAN FRANCISCO LAWYER, TO  
BE HONORED AS PUBLIC LAWYER OF THE YEAR BY  
STATE BAR**

San Francisco, September 23, 2004 – Roderick E. Walston, a lifelong public lawyer, has been selected as the 2004 Public Lawyer of the Year by the State Bar of California. He will receive the prestigious annual award from California Chief Justice Ronald M. George at the State Bar's Annual Meeting in Monterey October 8, 2004.



Organized in 1978, the Public Law Section of the State Bar of California promotes the practice of public law by attorneys employed in government and private attorneys who practice public law. Among other things, the Public Law Section publishes the *Public Law Journal*, monitors relevant legislation, and provides educational programs for continuing education of public attorneys.

Every year, the Public Law Section nominates a recipient for the Public Lawyer of the Year Award. The Award is intended to recognize career accomplishments in the field of public law. This year's Award recognizes the long contributions of Roderick Walston to the fields of water law, natural resources, and environmental law.

Walston's career in public service spans over 43 years. After graduating from Columbia University and Stanford Law School, where he was an editor of the *Stanford Law Review*, Walston served as a Law Clerk to Judge M. Oliver Koelsch of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals from 1961 to 1962. Thereafter, Walston began a long and distinguished career as an attorney with the California Department of Justice.

Walston was one of the first members of the Justice Department's natural resources practice group, and he quickly became a leader in the field of water rights law.

While a Deputy Attorney General, Walston argued many cases before the United States Supreme Court, California Supreme Court, and other appellate courts. Some of Walston's major cases include *California v. United States*, a 1978 case in which the U.S. Supreme Court held that federal agencies must comply with state water laws in operating federal reclamation projects; and *California v. Cabazon Band of Mission Indians*, a 1987 case regarding state regulation of Indian gaming. Another notable case is 1983's *National Audubon Society v. Superior Court*, in which the California Supreme Court held the public trust doctrine applies to water rights. This was a landmark case in the evolving law of the public trust. In 1997, Walston received the U.S. Supreme Court "Best Brief Award" from the National Association of Attorneys General.

Walston left state service in 2000 to become General Counsel of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the largest municipal water agency in the United States. In 2002, Walston was nominated by the President of the United States as Deputy Solicitor of the U.S. Department of the Interior. In April 2004, Walston left Interior as the Acting Solicitor to join the law firm of Stoel Rives in San Francisco, where he is a member of the firm's Resources, Development, and Environment Group.

For more information, contact [Thomas.Pye@calbar.ca.gov](mailto:Thomas.Pye@calbar.ca.gov).